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## THE HEALTH CONSEQUENCES OF SMOKING A REPORT OF THE SURGEON GENERAL



### Smoking Among Adults: Coronary Heart Disease and Stroke

- Coronary heart disease and stroke—the primary types of cardiovascular disease caused by smoking—are the first and third leading causes of death in the United States. More than 61 million Americans suffer from some form of cardiovascular disease, including high blood pressure, coronary heart disease, stroke, congestive heart failure, and other conditions. More than 2,600 Americans die every day because of cardiovascular diseases, about 1 death every 33 seconds. (p. 363)
- Toxins in the blood from smoking cigarettes contribute to the development of atherosclerosis. Atherosclerosis is a progressive hardening of the arteries caused by the deposit of fatty plaques and the scarring and thickening of the artery wall. Inflammation of the artery wall and the development of blood clots can obstruct blood flow and cause heart attacks or strokes. (p. 364-365)
- Smoking causes coronary heart disease, the leading cause of death in the United States. Coronary heart disease results from atherosclerosis of the coronary arteries. (p. 384, 407)
- In 2003, an estimated 1.1 million Americans had a new or recurrent coronary attack. (p. 384)
- Cigarette smoking has been associated with sudden cardiac death of all types in both men and women. (p. 387)
- Smoking-related coronary heart disease may contribute to congestive heart failure. An estimated 4.6 million Americans have congestive heart failure and 43,000 die from it every year. (p. 387)
- Smoking low-tar or low-nicotine cigarettes rather than regular cigarettes appears to have little effect on reducing the risk for coronary heart disease. (p. 386, 407)
- Strokes are the third leading cause of death in the United States. Cigarette smoking is a major cause of strokes. (p. 393)
- The U.S. incidence of stroke is estimated at 600,000 cases per year, and the one-year fatality rate is about 30%. (p. 393)

- The risk of stroke decreases steadily after smoking cessation. Former smokers have the same stroke risk as nonsmokers after 5 to 15 years. (p. 394)
- Smoking causes abdominal aortic aneurysm. (p. 397)

### Citation

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***Smoking remains the leading cause of preventable death and has negative health impacts on people at all stages of life. It harms unborn babies, infants, children, adolescents, adults, and seniors.***

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Office on Smoking and Health